

Oil and Community: The Art & Science of Sustainability

Spring 2007 (6 credits: Soc 402 plus Soc 403/equivalent)

Instructors:

Dr. Sara Dorow (Sociology, Faculty of Arts)

sdorow@ualberta.ca

492-4301

6-11 Tory Bldg

Office Hours: email to set-up a time

Dr. Karsten Mündel (Augustana Campus)

kmundel@ualberta.ca

492-2420

11039 Saskatchewan Drive

Office Hours: email to set-up a time

Zane Hamm (Adult Education)

zhamm@ualberta.ca

492-2420

11039 Saskatchewan Drive

Office Hours: email to set-up a time

Course Time and Place:

Monday and Wednesday*, 10 am – 12 pm Place: GSB 859

Thursday, 6:00 – 8:30 pm

Place: ETLC 1-013

*Wednesday May 9 & 16 the course will start at 9:00 am and run until 12:00pm

Online: <http://moodle.augustana.ca> (you will have received a password by email)

Introduction to the CSL Spring Immersion Program

This spring 2007 course is the first of what the Community Service-Learning Program hopes will be an annual spring course that integrates the following components and principles:

- an intensive service-learning component immersing students in a short but in-depth community volunteer project of direct relevance to the course topics and themes
- direct link between the course topic and the instructors' research projects/interests
- interdisciplinary in course content; students drawn from a variety of disciplines and faculties
- a course topic of timely significance.

The main topic course in which students register is Soc 402: Topics in Sociology: "Oil and Community: The Art & Science of Sustainability" (3 credits). Because this is an intensive community service-learning course in which students will spend substantial time preparing for and carrying out a project with and for a community organization, there is a co-requisite 3-credit course to cover the additional experiential field component. Soc 403 or IntD 325/425 may serve as the co-requisite; students may also work with their home departments to arrange registration in an equivalent individualized study or field study course.

Introduction to Oil and Sustainability

In downtown Fort McMurray, the hamlet at the heart of the fastest developing and second largest known oil deposits in the world, there is an establishment called Boomtown Casino. The neon light of the marquee over the entrance to the casino flicks on and off night and day, announcing "Boomtown, Boomtown, Boomtown..." The sign is a constant reminder of the many overlapping issues and images conjured by the 'oil boom': oil as highly valuable but limited commodity in the global economy, the

role of new technologies in the expanded extraction of oil, disputes over public and private claims to land and resources, relationships of local and immigrant labour, Aboriginal histories and rights, the gendered and raced experiences of diverse individuals and families, the politics of redistribution, and the intensification of environmental and health problems.

This course focuses on the pressures on communities and social well-being under this rapid and complex set of changes, and how those communities can and do respond. While the characteristics of the Alberta oil economy—from the giant trucks of the oil patch to the financial headquarters of Calgary—are in some ways quite unique, they present an opportunity to examine the intersecting effects of economic, social, and technological development faced by many communities in Canada and elsewhere. Our geographical imaginary of oil and sustainability will start in Fort McMurray and the tar sands, but will then link these sites to other communities and cities in Alberta, Canada, and the world.

The goals of this course are not only to understand the key facets of the oil economy, but also to develop analytical interdisciplinary tools and firsthand experiential knowledge of the community experiences of ‘the boom.’ As outlined in more detail in the schedule below, we will explore the issue of oil and sustainability in Alberta in several specific ways:

- a series of readings and in-class presentations introducing us to the social, economic, and technological aspects of oil extraction in Alberta
- a speakers series of experts (Thursday evenings)
- introductions to theories and methods for interdisciplinary analysis of community
- preparation and implementation of two service projects with Fort McMurray community organizations (one on youth and employment; the other on immigration and settlement), conducted in interdisciplinary teams of students, who will meet weekly with a TA or Instructor
- opportunities for students to serve as researchers in Dr. Dorow’s community ethnography in Fort McMurray
- one week in Fort McMurray
- the creation of class projects and presentations that reflect ongoing learning across course material and CSL activities

Weekly Outline

UNIT I: Introduction to the Course

Goals:

- Introduction to the course and to the CSL projects
- Introduce the oil boom (history and technology of the oilsands, and key contemporary impacts of its growth)
- Explore interdisciplinarity and the kinds of skills the course is meant to develop
- Introduce a conceptual framework for studying community sustainability
- Form interdisciplinary teams for study and for CSL projects in Fort McMurray
- Organize students for hosting speakers series

Reflection:

From your disciplinary perspective, what would be of particular interest regarding the oil boom? What are the strengths of this perspective? What are some of the shortcomings? How can it be complemented by insights from other disciplines and perspectives?

Monday, May 7:

Introductions to course and overview

- Laird, G. (2005). Spent energy: Re-fueling the Alberta advantage. In T. Harrison (Ed.), *The return of the Trojan horse: Alberta and the new world (dis)order* (pp. 156-172). Montreal: Black Rose Books.
- Scoffield, H. (2006, September 15). Alberta's boom starts to rival China's; Province's growth seen as sustainable. *The Globe and Mail*.
- Flakstad, N. (2006). Blackearth boom. *Canadian Consulting Engineer*, 47(1), 28-37.

Sustainable communities: A model for interdisciplinary understanding of oil in Alberta

- Caton, L., & Larsh, S. (2000). An idea whose time has come: A decade of healthy community activity in Ontario. In Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition (Ed.), *Inspiring change: healthy cities and communities in Ontario* (pp. 5-22). Toronto: Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition.

Wednesday, May 9:

Oilsands 101

Mike Lipsett, Professor, Mechanical Engineering

Interdisciplinarity, Oil & Sustainability

- “Ten Cheers for Interdisciplinarity: The Case for Interdisciplinary Knowledge and Research” (Nissani 1997)
- Klein Chapter 7 on interdisciplinarity
- Stern Report Summary
- WHO Health Impacts of Climate Change (pp. 1-17)
- Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA)

Research tools for community ethnography

- Harper, G. W., Lardon, C., Rappaport, J., Bangi, A. K., Contreras, R., & Pedraza, A. (2004). Community narratives: The use of narrative ethnography in participatory community research. In L. Jason, C. Keys, Y. Suarez-Balcazar, R. R. Taylor, M. Davis, J. Durlak & et al. (Eds.), *Participatory Community Research: Theories and Methods in Action* (pp. 199-217). Washington, DC: American Psychology Association.
- Genzuk, Michael (2003) “A Synthesis of Ethnographic Research.” www-ref.usc.edu/~genzuk/Ethnographic_Research.html
- Browse file of ‘social mapping’ resources on Moodle and in CSL House

Thursday, May 10

Melissa Blake, Mayor Municipality of Wood Buffalo

- Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. (2007). Municipal Census 2006. Retrieved April 5, 2007, from http://www.woodbuffalo.ab.ca/business/demographics/pdf/2006_census.pdf

Extra Reading:

- Austin, Diane E. (2003) “Collaborative Team Ethnography: A Community-University-Agency Partnership” *Human Organization* 62(2): 143-152
- Steiner, G., & Posch, A. (2006). Higher education for sustainability by means of transdisciplinary case studies: an innovative approach for solving complex, real-world problems. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 14(9-11), 877-890.
- Harrison, T. (2005). *The return of the Trojan horse: Alberta and the new world (dis)order*. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
- *Developing Alberta’s Oil Sands* (Chastko 2004) chapters 8 & 9
- www.oilsandsreview.com

UNIT II (May 14 – 17): Key Issues in Oil Development: Laying the Groundwork for Community Projects in Fort McMurray

Goals:

- *Overview of the issues students will be researching/addressing in their CSL projects in Fort McMurray: youth and work, and immigration and family
- *Introduction to key issues for Aboriginal peoples affected by the oil industry in northern Alberta
- *Background research on issues to be addresses in projects in Fort McMurray
- *Lay out basics of community-based ethnographic research, and global ethnography

Reflection:

What are some key challenges to community sustainability that result from the Alberta oil boom? What are you expecting to see in this regard in Fort McMurray (based on readings and class discussions)? Students will consider at least environmental, economic and social perspectives in this reflection.

Journal:

Write about ethical considerations in preparation for time in Fort McMurray

Extra Readings for Groups

Group I (Immigrant project): “Supporting Immigrants and Immigration to Alberta” (HRE Alberta, 2005) (www.hre.gov.ab.ca/documents/WIA/WIA-IM_policy_framework.pdf)

Group Y (Youth project): “Wood Buffalo Map of Youth Assets and Opportunities 2006-2008” (YES, 2006) (<http://www.woodbuffalo.net/www.woodbuffalo.net/pdfs/YESreport.pdf>)

Monday, May 14

Colonial legacies and key debates over social and economic resources: ‘cultural’ and/or ‘market’ citizenship?

1) Selections from *Indigenous Affairs* 2006: 2-3 (special issue on oil and gas): Introduction (pp. 4-6); Mackenzie Gas Project - Nuttall (pp. 20-29); Oilsands – Westman (pp. 30-39)

2) Altamirano-Jimenez, Isabel (December 2004) “North American First Peoples: Slipping up into Market Citizenship?” *Citizenship Studies* 8(4): 349-365.

‘Social mapping’ exercise due...discussion in class

Wednesday, May 16

“Flexible” labour: migration, gender, and family

- “Winning, Losing, and Still Playing the Game: The Political Economy of Immigration in Canada.” (D. Hiebert, 2005)
- “‘Between Belonging’: Habitus and the Migration Experience” (Marshall and Foster, 2002)

Grant Writing

- OHCC Strategies for Effective Proposal Writing
(<http://www.healthycommunities.on.ca/publications/misc/fundproposal.pdf>)
Youth, Employment, and Community

Thursday, May 17

Speakers:

Sherilyn Trompetter, Changing Together

Jan Reimer, *Alberta Council of Women’s Shelters*

UNIT III (May 21 – 27): Fort McMurray

Goals:

- *Introduction to the places, people, and institutions of Fort McMurray (including oilsands tour)
- *Carry out CSL projects in teams
- *Participate in Dorow’s research project (community narratives of Fort McMurray)
- *Students as constant participant observers and students of place

Reflection:

What are your impressions of the impact of the oil boom on Fort McMurray? You are encouraged to write this week’s reflection to be submitted to a relevant publication in your discipline or to the Parkland Post. Creative work is highly encouraged.

Fort McMurray Week – Schedule May 21-26

<i>Monday May 21</i>	<i>Tuesday May 22</i>	<i>Wednesday May 23</i>	<i>Thursday May 24</i>	<i>Friday May 25</i>	<i>Saturday May 26</i>
Meet at CSL House 9:00am EVE: -settle in -group meeting: discussion of social mapping Future Forward	AM: 9:30am CSL Group meetings with local contacts 11:45- 1:30 Soup Kitchen & Centre of Hope PM: Mapping and/or CSL Interviews; how to do Ethnographic Fieldwork Driving tour of Fort Mac 2:30-4 EVE: Dinner out with City Planners -journal writing; discussion of Himley	AM: Tour of Oilsands Syncrude Site Postering & Outreach EVE: Group meeting: impressions, etc.; journal writing; discussion of www.oilsandsconsult ations.com Workshop with Youth for some & perhaps Centre for Hope (clean-up) for rest	AM/PM: Mapping and/or CSL Interviews -visit union Second Youth Workshop – University Transitions -- and/or tours/interviews	AM/PM: Mapping and/or CSL Interviews PM: 2:00 Friday Final meetings with local CSL project mentors Event with youth: Music night at the Dugout...	AM: Work Camp tour? EVE: Wrap up at the Dugout.

UNIT IV (May 28 – 31): Oil Extraction in global context: re-situating Fort McMurray

Goals:

- *Debrief from Fort McMurray
- *Gather together CSL project information, begin to organize and identify further research needs/areas
- *Develop tools for theorizing local/urban/regional/global interconnections of oil and community (migration, youth, family/gender, environment, impact of technology, colonialism)
- *Introduction to the impact on other sectors of the economy (agriculture, forestry, processing, finance)

Reflection:

What are the forces, connections and imaginaries that link Fort McMurray to the global political economy of oil? How does the book you reviewed shed light on this question?

Monday, May 28

Commodity Chains and Global Political Economies of Oil

- [GLOBAL ETHNOGRAPHY](#). By: Gille, Zsuzsa; Ó Riain, Seán. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2002, Vol. 28 Issue 1, p271-295, 25p
- [The Biopolitics of Security: Oil, Empire, and the Sports Utility Vehicle](#) By: Campbell, David. *American Quarterly*, Sep2005, Vol. 57 Issue 3, p943-972, 30p
- one-pager from *Development and Social Change* (Philip McMichael) on commodity chains

Wednesday, May 30

The economics of the oil industry

Joseph A. Doucet, *Enbridge Professor of Energy Policy*

- “Oil in Troubled Waters” *Economist* April 2005
- *Alberta Venture* June 2005:
 - “The China Syndrome” (James Stevenson): Chinese investment in AB
 - “Northern Rights” (Jack Danylchuk): Northern pipeline issues
 - “Defying Convention” (Tom Maloney): Unconventional gas in Alberta

Discussion of book reviews

Thursday, May 31

Speaker: Melody Lepine Mikesew Industrial Relations Corporation

- background: http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/mms/sociprac/p_e.htm

UNIT V (June 4 – 7): Material and Cultural Life: Re-visiting Interdisciplinary Models of Sustainability

Goals:

- *Re-working the framework(s) with which we began for the interdisciplinary study of oil and sustainability
- *Applying sustainability to the case of oil in Alberta

Reflection:

What are some of the key links between the oil industry as seen in Fort McMurray and other communities (First Nations, Edmonton, Viking, etc)? What are the impacts on these other communities

especially environmental or health? How can you draw on the model of sustainable communities to explore these impacts?

Monday, June 4

Presentation of projects & how they are coming together

Impact of oil industry on rural/agricultural Alberta

Don Ruzicka, Sustainable farmer from Killam, AB

Producing knowledge with communities

- Corburn 2006: Community knowledge in environmental health science: co-producing policy expertise *Environmental Science & Policy 10 (2007)*
- Other readings TBA

Wednesday, June 6

Revisiting interdisciplinary model of sustainability (Social, Environmental & Political-Economic)

- Patriquin, M. N., Alavalapati, J. R. R., Adamowicz, W. L., & White, W. A. (2003). Incorporating natural capital into economy-wide impact analysis: A case study from Alberta. *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment, 86*(1-2), 149-169.
- “Technological Education, Interdisciplinarity, and the Journey toward Sustainable Development” (Elshof 2003)
- Klemes, J., & Huisingh, D. (2005). Making progress toward sustainability by using cleaner production technologies, improved design and economically sound operation of production facilities. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 13*(5), 451-454.
- [Constraints and Opportunities for Social Development and Private Sector Cooperation: The Case of Resource-Extraction Projects](#). By: Fishlock, Janet; Lee, Bill. Social Development Issues, 2004, Vol. 26 Issue 1, p38-50, 13p

Thursday, June 7

Speaker: Diana Gibson, Research Director, Parkland Institute

Reading: Parkland Report (that Diana will be presenting)

Extra Reading

- Additional selections from *Journal of Cleaner Production* April 2005 (special issue on sustainable development)
- Cabezas, H., Pawlowski, C. W., Mayer, A. L., & Hoagland, N. T. (2005). Sustainable systems theory: ecological and other aspects. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 13*(5), 455-467.
- Cziner, K., Tuomaala, M., & Hurme, M. (2005). Multicriteria decision making in process integration. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 13*(5), 475-483.
- Zhelev, T. K. (2005). On the integrated management of industrial resources incorporating finances. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 13*(5), 469-474.

UNIT VI (June 11 – 14): Wrapping Up

Goals:

- *Complete projects in teams.
- *Give presentations

*Wrap up the term.

Monday, June 11

Revisiting the model

Wednesday, June 13

Final Presentations

Thursday, June 14

Wrap-up Pizza Party

Course Assignments

%	Assignment
30	Active Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular participation in class discussions• Meaningful participation in volunteer activities• Speaker series• Small group work (meeting 1 hour before or after class with a TA or instructor)
40	Portfolio <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Field journal (reactions to ongoing course material; includes drafts of piece of proposal, minutes of group meetings) (15% + participation mark—see above)• Weekly reflections (5 X 5%)
10	Volunteer project “deliverable”
20	Final integrative paper

Active Participation

Students are expected to participate fully in all aspects of the program: class discussions, volunteer projects, group work including weekly presentations and contributions to Moodle discussion, tours and the speakers’ series. Evaluation will be a combination of instructor/TA observation, peer evaluation & field journal (a student’s notes from guest speakers, tours, etc; not graded for grammar but for completeness and as a sign of participation).

Portfolio

Students will compile a portfolio, submitted in stages and in its entirety at the conclusion of the course, that includes key artifacts of their learning through the course. The portfolio is comprised of a Field Journal and Weekly Reflections.

Field Journal

- 1) Students are expected to keep a field journal in which they keep notes from all class activities including readings, class lectures, guest speakers, tours, observations from time spent in the community, the speakers series, small-group meetings, etc. The journal is not graded for grammar, but should be good evidence of students’ participation in the range of course activities. Students are expected to record items that are useful to their work as researchers and learners (there is no expectation of detailed notes on every discussion / activity). This will be submitted at the end of the class, June 14.

- 2) Students will also make **twice weekly entries** into an online field journal which are part of the process of synthesizing the experiences in the course. These entries should show students making links between different parts of the course (for example, between a reading and a particular aspect of a group project). These entries can focus on themes that interest you in a given week and should include:
- reactions to course readings
 - responses to course material covered in class
 - observations particularly related to your community-facing projects and your time in Fort McMurray
 - reflection on what is going on in your project group (this is different from your regular contributions to your project forum)

Weekly reflections

Every week, students will write a piece that combines their reaction to a specific set of questions in light of the readings and guest speakers of the week and their disciplinary perspective. Assignments are due the Monday of the following week (May 14, 21, 28; June 4, 11). These pieces will form the basis for the integrative and summative paper. Papers should be ~ 4 pages in length.

Week 1: From your disciplinary perspective, what would be of particular interest regarding the oil boom? What are the strengths of this perspective? What are some of the shortcomings? How can it be complemented by insights from other disciplines and perspectives?

Week 2: What are some key challenges to community sustainability that result from the Alberta oil boom? What are you expecting to see in this regard in Fort McMurray (based on readings and class discussions)? Students will consider at least environmental, economic and social perspectives in this reflection.

Week 3: What are your impressions of the impact of the oil boom on Fort McMurray? You are encouraged to write this week's reflection to be submitted to a relevant publication in your discipline or to the Parkland Post. Creative work is highly encouraged.

Week 4: What are the forces, connections and imaginaries that link Fort McMurray to the global political economy of oil? How does the book you reviewed shed light on this question?

Week 5: What are some of the key links between the oil industry as seen in Fort McMurray and other communities (First Nations, Edmonton, Viking, etc)? What are the impacts on these other communities especially environmental or health? How can you draw on the model of sustainable communities to explore these impacts?

Volunteer project “deliverable”

All of the volunteer projects will involve some type of deliverable that students are required to submit. While these deliverables—reports, information booklets, websites, summaries—will be group projects, groups are expected to divide the tasks evenly amongst group members. The course TA will support this process of group work to help ensure that work is evenly divided and that everyone's contributions are taken into consideration. Students will use Moodle to collaborate on the development of these projects.

Final integrative paper

Based on the work done in the weekly reflective pieces, students will submit a 8-10 page paper that revisits the interdisciplinary model used to explore the boom. Students will pick a specific aspect of the impact of the oil boom and based on their observations, reflect on how that topic can be studied from their disciplinary perspective while integrating other (disciplinary) perspectives. This assignment will

take the form of a research proposal built around a key question, the context for the question and how it can be analyzed. The paper will draw on a range of relevant materials and experience from the class as well as additional resources.

Grades

Grades will be calculated in percentage form throughout the term and will be converted into letter form only for your final course grade. No particular distribution (e.g. bell curve) is used to determine grades. You will receive a failing grade if you receive less than 50% on all required course work, or if you receive less than 50% on the Research Project Assignment.

A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	76-79
B	72-75
B-	69-71
C+	65-68
C	61-64
C-	58-60
D+	54-57
D	50-53
F	0-49

Academic Integrity and Course Outline Policy

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University. Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar.